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**NEWS From:**

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**Congressman Mike Honda**

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**FIFTEENTH DISTRICT - CALIFORNIA**

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**Honda Applauds President's Decision to Establish Minidoka National Monument**

**San Jose, CA—** U.S. Congressman Mike Honda (D-San Jose) today lauded President Clinton's invocation of the federal Antiquities Act to preserve the Minidoka camp in Hunt, Idaho, where over 9,000 Japanese Americans were interned during World War II. Honda, a third generation Japanese American who himself was interned with his family in Amache, Colorado during World War II, led the effort while a member of the California State Assembly to fund educational programs on civil liberties and the Internment period in American history.

**"I applaud President Clinton's dedication to the cause of civil rights and his historic effort to preserve the Minidoka camp as an important part of our nation's history,"** said Honda. **"I am hopeful that this Monument will serve as a reminder to all of us that, especially during times of national strife and adversity, we must remain true to the cause of civil liberty and never be swayed by the currents of greed, fear or racism."**

The Minidoka internment camp was in operation from August 1942 to October 1945, housing Japanese Americans who were forcibly removed from their homes in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. The camp covered more than 33,000 acres of land with administrative and residential facilities located on approximately 950 acres. Following World War II, most of the lands from the camp were transferred to private ownership. The Minidoka Internment National Monument encompasses the administrative area of the former internment camp and includes the remains of the sentry house, the waiting room and other historic structures and objects. The Monument consists of approximately 72.75 acres of federal land and will be managed by the National Park Service.

In the early 1960's, Honda served two years in the Peace Corps building schools and health clinics in El Salvador. While a member of the California State Assembly, Honda led a successful effort to enact the California Civil Liberties Public Education Act, which secured \$1 million to establish educational programs and curricula about the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II for use in libraries and classrooms throughout California. Honda was recently named the "Japanese American of the Biennium" for his lifelong dedication to the improvement of education and the protection of civil liberty by the Japanese American Citizens League, a leading civil and human rights organization in the United States. Honda continues to be a leading advocate for the cause of civil rights and social justice in the United States as a Member of Congress representing California's 15<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.